

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-8 (canceled).

Claim 9 (currently amended): A method for forming a thin film on a substrate by decomposing gas introduced to a surface of a substrate held by a substrate holding device having a cover body which is disposed in an area surrounding said substrate held by said substrate holding device, said cover body being able to open and close by rotational movement, said method comprising:

a step of preventing said gas introduced to said surface of said substrate from being influenced by outside air,

wherein a clearance between an upper face of said cover body and an upper face of said substrate is set to be 0.5 mm or less.

Claim 10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): A method for forming a thin film on a substrate by introducing gas to a surface of a substrate held by a substrate holding device having a cover body which is disposed in an area surrounding said substrate held by said substrate holding device, said cover body being able to open and close by rotational movement, by radiating said introduced gas with laser, by decomposing said introduced gas and then by suctioning and discharging decompositional by-products, said method comprising:

a step of preventing said gas introduced to said surface of said substrate from being influenced by outside air,

wherein a clearance between an upper face of said cover body and an upper face of said substrate is set to be 0.5 mm or less.

Claim 12 (canceled).

Claim 13 (new): The method for forming a thin film according to claim 9, wherein said substrate holding device is provided with a trench along a circumference of the held substrate and the introduced gas is able to be discharged through said trench.

Claim 14 (new): The method for forming a thin film according to claim 9, wherein a sheet is provided at a boundary between said held substrate and said substrate holding device.

Claim 15 (new): The method for forming a thin film according to claim 11, wherein said substrate holding device is provided with a trench along a circumference of the held substrate and the introduced gas is able to be discharged through said trench.

Claim 16 (new): The method for forming a thin film according to claim 11, wherein a sheet is provided at a boundary between said held substrate and said substrate holding device.